

The included national stage fees which have been submitted concurrently with this document include the payment of the fees specified in 37 C.F.R. §1.492(a)(4) since Claims 1-43 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(4) as stated in the International Preliminary Examination Report (IPER) dated November 19, 1998. The IPER has been transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, as an Elected Office, as stated in the Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report dated January 11, 1999.

The foregoing amendment to the dependency of Claim 39 constitutes a change in form only. Accordingly, it would appear that the included amendment to Claim 39 is consistent with the payment of reduced national stage fees set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.492(a)(4) based on the following statement in 37 C.F.R. §1.496:

"Such national stage applications in which the basic national fee as set forth in §1.492(a)(4) has been paid may be amended subsequent to the date of entry into the national phase only to the extent necessary to eliminate objections as to form or to cancel rejected claims."

However, if this interpretation is not correct (i.e., the included amendment to Claim 39 is not consistent with the payment of fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.492(a)(4)) and the enclosed payment of national stage fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.492 is not correct, the Commissioner is hereby expressly authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required to Deposit Account No. 50-0858. A duplicate copy of this document is enclosed in the event it may facilitate processing of the captioned application.

Respectfully submitted,

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